

Applicant's Remarks

As a preliminary matter, attention is directed to the Request for Continued Examination (RCE) submitted herewith.

Applicant respectfully submits that the amendments and comments herein place this application in condition for allowance, in line with the comments made in the Office action.

In particular, in the office action at page 10, the Examiner made the following statement in regard to allowable subject matter:

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 22 and 23 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

It is respectfully submitted that the amendments herein are responsive to the Examiner's statement, quoted above.

New claim 29 has been added. New claim 29 represents the combination of original claims 15 and 22, including all of the limitations of intervening claims 20 and 21, as appropriate. Thus new claim 29 is essentially claim 22 rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims (i.e., claims 20 and 21), in compliance with the Examiner's statement under "Allowable Subject Matter".

Claims 15, 20, 21 and 22 have accordingly been canceled.

Claim 23 has not been amended since it was already in independent form.

Claims 16 and 17 have been currently amended to depend from new claim 29. Applicant requests to retain these claims as they simply narrow the scope of Het, A, and/or R¹, Applicant noting that the scope of these variables is otherwise unaffected by claim 22, or by either of intervening dependent claims 21 and 20. By virtue of their dependency from claim 29, claims 16 and 17 also now incorporate the limitations of (now canceled) independent claim 15 plus the limitations of (now canceled) claims 20, 21, and 22, per the Examiner's statement under "Allowable Subject Matter"

The remaining claims not mentioned above, i.e., claims 18, 19 and 24-28 have been canceled.

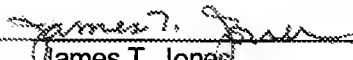
Applicant notes that the amendments herein are being made without waiver or prejudice to Applicant's right to file one or more continuation applications directed to canceled subject matter.

In view of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that this case is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is courteously solicited.

If the Examiner is in disagreement with any portion of this response and feels a telephone discussion may help resolve any issues, it is requested that she contact the undersigned attorney at the number indicated.

Respectfully submitted,

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